UTILITY APPLICATION

of

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HEAD COVER FOR A GOLF CLUB

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HEAD COVER FOR A GOLF CLUB

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to golf club protection and, more particularly, to a head cover for a golf club.

[0002] Proper care of golf clubs is required both to maximize their usable life and to maintain their performance. An important aspect of proper care includes keeping the head of the golf club covered when not in use, as the clubs are inclined to knock against each other in the golf bag. If not properly covered, damage to the club head and shaft can result. Thus, head covers are widely used.

[0003] Covers typically include a pouch-shaped upper portion for containing a golf club head and a narrowed portion extended therefrom sized to accommodate the shaft. The upper portion is usually made of flexible material, such as synthetic leather, and the tail portion is of knitted construction which expands and contracts when a golf club head. Since the tail portion is knitted, it will only expand to a limited extent and although it is relatively slim in comparison to the pouch shaped upper portion, it must be large enough to allow passage of the golf club head.

[0004] Although such prior covers are generally effective, deficiencies exist. For example, such head covers can be difficult to install and remove. As a result, golfers tend to be lax with its use. This inevitably exposes the club to additional damage, in turn, shortening the life of the club. Some prior head covers may incorporate enlarged opening to facilitate easy access for the club head; however, such head cover can be less secure on the golf club. Such head covers also may incorporate fastening assemblies that require some attention and precision to operate, thereby discouraging frequent use.

[0005] It should, therefore, be appreciated that there exists a need for a head cover for a golf club that is relatively simple to install and remove on the club head. The present invention fulfills this need and others.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention provides a head cover having a cover body formed essentially of flexible, non-rigid and a magnetic fastener. More particularly, the cover body defines an inner compartment for receiving the club head and defines an adjustable opening to the inner compartment sized to provide easy access thereto. The cover body may be provided with a cushioned inner liner and an outer cover. The magnetic fastener is disposed about the opening and is configured to at least partially shut the opening, thereby maintaining the head cover on the club head, once installed. As the fastener is operable via magnetic force, engagement and disengagement of the fastener is achieved without undue manipulation. Thus, frequent use of the club head is promoted.

[0007] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the cover body includes a flap disposed about the opening and a fastener region spaced apart from the flap about the opening. A first magnet of the magnetic fastener is disposed in the flap, and a second magnet is disposed in the fastener region. Preferably, the flap is configured to overlap the fastener region such that the first and second magnets engage one another to at least partially shut the opening.

[0008] In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the magnetic fastener includes first and second magnetic strips, each disposed in corresponding elongated edges positioned about the opening of the cover body such that the first and second magnetic strips can engage one another to at least partially shut the opening.

[0009] In a detailed aspect of a preferred embodiment, the magnetic strips each comprise a plurality of magnets preferably disposed in a conforming sleeve, such as, heat shrink tubing. The elongated edges of the cover body can be defined by a pair of elastic

cords attached to the inner liner and the outer cover, and the magnetic strips can be disposed therein.

[0010] For purposes of summarizing the invention and the advantages achieved over the prior art, certain advantages of the invention have been described herein. Of course, it is to be understood that not necessarily all such advantages may be achieved in accordance with any particular embodiment of the invention. Thus, for example, those skilled in the art will recognize that the invention may be embodied or carried out in a manner that achieves or optimizes one advantage or group of advantages as taught herein without necessarily achieving other advantages as may be taught or suggested herein.

[0011] All of these embodiments are intended to be within the scope of the invention herein disclosed. These and other embodiments of the present invention will become readily apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments having reference to the attached figures, the invention not being limited to any particular preferred embodiment disclosed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] Embodiments of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the following drawings in which:

[0013] FIG. 1 is a front view of a first preferred embodiment of a head cover in accordance with the invention, depicting an elongated fastener in a closed configuration extending longitudinally along the head cover.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a front perspective view of the head cover of FIG. 1, depicting the elongated fastener partially disengaged.

[0015] FIG. 3 is a close-up cross-sectional view of a portion of the elongated fastener from Area A of FIG. 2, depicting a magnetic sleeve disposed within a cord of the cover head.

[0016] FIG. 4, is a cross-sectional view taken along line B-B of FIG. 3 depicting a portion of the fastener of the head cover of FIG. 1.

[0017] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a second preferred embodiment of a head cover in accordance with the invention, depicting a head cover having an elongated fastener and cover body configured for a putter-type golf club.

[0018] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a third preferred embodiment of a head cover in accordance with the invention, depicting a head cover having a flap fastener for and a cover body for a putter-type golf club.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0019] With reference to the illustrative drawings, and particularly to FIG. 1, there is shown a head cover 10 for a golf club generally sized to conformably receive a club head. The head cover includes an upper end 12 that forms an inner compartment for the club head and a lower end 14 that defines an opening 16 sized to wrap about a shaft for the golf club. An elongated fastener 18 formed by aligned longitudinal edges 20 extends from the lower end of the head cover toward the upper portion thereof. Each longitudinal edge includes a hollow cord 24 along its length. Magnetic strips 26 (FIG. 3) are disposed within the cords, thereby operating the fastener via magnetic force. With the fastener engaged, the head cover is securely affixed to the golf club. With the fastener disengaged (see FIG. 2), the opening is enlarged to facilitate easy installation and removal of the head cover about the golf club. Moreover, as the fastener is operable via magnetic force, engagement and disengagement of the fastener is achieved without undue manipulation, thereby promoting frequent use of the head cover.

[0020] With reference now to FIGS. 3 and 4, the magnetic strips 26 each comprise a plurality of magnets 28 bound within a conforming sleeve 30. In the exemplary embodiment, the magnets are generally cylindrical having a length (L) of about 6 mm and a diameter (d) of about 0.5 mm. Also, the conforming sleeve is formed of heat shrink

tubing, and the magnets are spaced therein a distance (s) of about 4 mm from one another. In this embodiment, about 23 magnets are used in each strip. Alternatively, each magnetic strip can comprise a single elongated magnet, or a plurality of magnets of various forms can be used. For example, four cylindrical magnet can be spaced along the longitudinal edge 20.

[0021] Each magnetic strip 26 is held in place along longitudinal edge 20 by the cord 24. The cord is formed of elastic material and, as shown in FIG. 4, is bound to both an inner liner 32 and an outer cover 34 by stitching 36. The head cover 10 is preferably formed of flexible, non-rigid material. The inner liner is formed of soft, flexible material, e.g., cotton, padded velvet and the like, that is non-abrasive to the club head. The outer cover is also formed of flexible material; however, the material of the outer cover may be selected to further provide some structural integrity to the cover head. Examples of material for the outer cover include leather and synthetic rubber (e.g., neoprene). In other embodiments, rigid supports may be spaced about the cover body to aid in protection of the club head and/or to provide shape to the cover body. For example, the head cover may include a metal wire (not shown) disposed in piping 37 (FIG. 2) defined in the outer cover.

[0022] With reference now to FIG. 5, a head cover 50 configured for use with a putter-type golf club is shown. The head cover includes a magnetic fastener 52 having a similar configuration as described above. With the fastener disengaged, the head cover provides an enlarged opening 54 enabling easy access for the putter head. The fastener includes two magnetic strips 56; each disposed in a portion of aligned edges 58. In other embodiments, the magnetic strips also can be disposed substantially the entire length of the aligned edges. The head cover defines a slot 60 positioned to correspond with the location of the shaft relative to the club head. In the exemplary embodiment, the slot is centrally located for use with putters having a center hosel. Nonetheless, other

embodiments can be configured to accommodate various other club head configurations, including various woods, irons and wedges.

[0023] FIG. 6 depicts another preferred embodiment of a head cover 70. In this embodiment, the head cover includes a flap 72 having a magnet 74 that overlaps a fastener portion 76 of the head cover having a second magnet (not shown) aligned with the first magnet, thereby forming a fastener 80. The magnets of this embodiment are cylindrical, having a diameter of about 15 mm and thickness of about 3 mm, and are disposed in pockets formed between an outer cover 84 and an inner liner 86 of the head cover. Although the exemplary embodiment is configured for a putter-type golf club, embodiments incorporating magnetic flap fasteners can be configured to accommodate various other club head configurations, including woods, irons and wedges.

[0024] It should be appreciated from the foregoing that the present invention provides a head cover for a golf club that is relatively simple use. The head cover includes a cover body formed essentially of flexible, non-rigid material and a magnetic fastener. More particularly, the cover body defines an inner compartment for receiving at least the head of the golf club having an adjustable opening sized to provide easy access thereto. The magnetic fastener is disposed about the opening to at least partially shut the opening, thereby maintaining the head cover on the club head, once installed. As the fastener is operable via magnetic force, engagement and disengagement of the fastener is achieved without undue manipulation, thereby promoting frequent use of the head cover.

[0025] Although the invention has been disclosed in detail with reference only to the preferred embodiments, those skilled in the art will appreciate that additional head covers for golf clubs can be included without departing from the scope of the invention. Accordingly, the invention is defined only by the claims set forth below.